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cords of charcoal. In the Arctic regions, vegetation, particularly that of the forest, is of extremely slow growth. Of course, the mosquito, the plague of northern woods, played its part in making this journey memorable. The trail is rather blind in many places through subdivision to get around streams and through confusion due to cattle and game tracks. The cattle are brought up from Seattle by steamer to Skagway, thence by rail and steamboat to Eagle or Circle. There they leave the Yukon and are driven overland to the Tanana region. The Northern Light is so bright in Alaska, even in summer, that our author argues for a thorough investigation of the phenomenon and comparison with the Northern Light of Europe and Asia.

The journey down the Tanana and the Yukon was not accomplished without difficulty. The boats are small, and in the latter part of the summer are dangerously over-crowded. The steamboats are of the familiar type of stern-wheelers seen on the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers and other shallow American waters. The Yukon shifts its channel constantly, and one morning the "Leah," on which the author was a passenger, struck a rock that ripped most of the bottom off the hull and caused the boat to sink. After spending three days of discomfort in rainy weather on the boat and in tents on shore, the steamboat "Campbell" rescued the shipwrecked party. She was far too small for the "Leah's" passengers, but they crowded aboard, and, after three and a half anxious days on the river and a bit of the sea, were safely transferred at St. Michael to ocean-going ships that took them to Nome, whence the return to Seattle was easy.

The book maintains its interest from first to last. The author kept his eyes open at every point of his long journey and describes in clear, vivid terms what he saw. Eskimos and their characteristics in different parts of Alaska and other tribes as he met them; travel conditions past and present, with remarks upon the cost and other features of life at the several points visited; wages and the rewards of labour; peculiarities of American and Canadian manners and customs; agriculture and forestry and their future; the metals and minerals associated with the gold,—all these and other valuable points are touched upon and treated briefly in suggestive fashion.

The book is beautifully printed upon heavily coated paper that takes the half tone illustrations well, and one can only wish that photographs had been reproduced more freely.

E. O. H.

Essai Sur Les Principes Des Sciences Mathématiques. Par Louis Delègue. 134 pp., Figures, and Index. Vuibert et Nony, Paris, 1908.

Our knowledge of space is limited in two ways. It is inexact, consisting only of the crude facts of experience; and it is restricted to a limited portion of space. In evolving a geometry of space, it is necessary to idealize these inexact matters of experience, that is, to regard them as mathematically exact. In short, it is necessary to assume the existence of mathematical points and lines, the continuity of space, the invariance of the properties of figures when displaced, and many other things.

When premises contain an assumption, there must be more than one equally valid conclusion; and hence mathematicians have long since learned that there are several systems of geometry, each exempt from self-contradiction but yet not at one among themselves.

It is through the critical examination of the necessary and sufficient premises upon which these systems of geometry are constructed and their mutual interdependence that this scholarly essay establishes numerous points of contact with questions that are of importance to mathematicians.

The learned author has been at great pains to determine the precise meaning of the fundamental, mathematical concepts and to show that, when the intuitive concepts implied in the definitions upon which the various systems of geometry are based have been truly interpreted, the non-Euclidian systems appear as legitimate deductions. G. W. L.

Altitude Tables. By Frederick Ball. xxxiii and 245 pp. J. D. Potter, London, 1907. Price, 15s.

The previously published tables of this nature, by the same author, taken together with the present ones, are in effect a tabulation of the great-circle distance and the true bearing, on the globe or on the celestial sphere, of any place whose latitude does not exceed 60° from every place whose latitude does not exceed 24°, and consequently they constitute a tabulation of the zenith-distance and bearing that the sun, or any celestial body within ecliptic limits, would have at any given time to an observer situated in any geographical position within 60° of latitude from the equator. So that an observer, in a geographical position as yet unknown, about to measure the altitude of a celestial body for the purpose of finding his position, may assume beforehand a geographical position in the region of his station, and find from the tables, within the limitations that have been specified, the zenith-distance and bearing which the celestial body would have if observed from the assumed position; and then, comparing the zenith-distance so taken from the tables, with the zenith-distance shown by the measured altitude, may at once find the position-line, or locus of geographical position, by laying off from the assumed geographical position, in the direction of the bearing, an intercept equal to the difference of these zenith-distances, and drawing through the point thus found, a line at right angles to the bearing.

In order that the tables should not be too voluminous and also with a view to obviate the necessity for laborious interpolation, admirable artifices are introduced by which convenience is attained in their practical use. G. W. L.

Die Buschmänner der Kalahari. Von Prof. Dr. S. Passarge. iv and 144 pp. Half-tone Illustrations, Drawings, Map and Vocabularies. Dietrich Reimer (Ernst Vohsen), Berlin, 1907. Price, M. 3.

When Dr. Passarge was collecting data for his monumental work on the Kalahari, he improved the opportunity to gather information on the Bushman tribes living in this waste. The difficulty of reaching this people, once scattered widely over South Africa, but to-day largely confined to the middle region of the Kalahari, has prevented adequate study of them. Dr. Passarge's contribution is all the more timely because the Bushmen will soon be extinct. Perhaps Dr. Pöch, who, for months, has been in the central Kalahari, whither he was sent to make an exhaustive study of the natives, will bring home the last important contribution to the history and life of these poor and wandering remnants.

That Dr. Passarge regards the race as one of the most unique and noteworthy is evident from the following quotation:

> Gustav Fritsch, the leading ethnologist of South Africa, said that the Bushman is the unhappy child of the time. Nothing is more changeful, untrustworthy, unaccountable, than the character of the Bushman. He unites in himself the greatest contrasts, virtue, and villainy. According to his mood and environment, he is the bravest hero and the most pitiful coward, the most diligent toiler, and the laziest do-nothing, the most harmless, clinging, joyous child, and the gloomiest, most designing and